

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation and of the close links consolidation fosters between the political process that allows consolidation and corporate greed.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. It is never in the public interest to air only one side of a story, or to force local stations to carry political advertising disguised as documentaries. It is crucial to democracy that local news and local issues, styles and flavors be encouraged, that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. It must include accountability by providing documentation of public service broadcast time. Thank you.